

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 001579

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/26/2015

TAGS: PREL MARR PGOV KPKO CG UG SU

SUBJECT: LRA UPDATE: CONGOLESE WOULD LIKE LRA OUT

REF: A. KAMPALA 2078 (NOTAL)

1B. KINSHASA 1567

1C. STATE 177083

1D. YAMAMOTO/MEECE TELCOM SEPT. 26

Classified By: Ambassador Roger Meece. Reasons 1.4(b/d).

11. (C) Vice President Ruberwa told the Ambassador September 26 that he shares the feelings of other senior GDRC officials that the LRA incursion into northern DRC represents an unwelcome intrusion into what is already a complicated and sensitive context. The government would like the LRA gone, preferably through repatriation to Uganda. Disarmament in any event is a prerequisite to any resolution of the situation.

12. (C) Ruberwa also confirmed that the situation in Aba (Orienteal Province, north of Ituri District) is one of the major items of discussion at the September 26 afternoon meeting of the Supreme Defense Council, the GDRC's senior-level coordinating body for military issues. In the meantime, plans are continuing to deploy FARDC "commando" units to Aba as quickly as possible. Kisangani-based General Padiri is in Aba already, with a delegation which includes representatives from MONUC, including DRRR experts.

13. (C) Separately, SRSG Bill Swing told the Ambassador that the initial read-out from the Aba delegation provided some mixed and contradictory information, possibly because of the poor quality of communications. It appeared, however, that three LRA representatives were detailed to meet with the delegation, headed by Col. Tabu. The group seemed to give some indications of wanting to defer substantive discussion, referring to a U.S.-based individual who could help clarify matters.

14. (C) Swing told the Ambassador that the reference to a U.S. individual also came up in an earlier conversation with President Kabila. Kabila reportedly told Swing that the individual, Jongomoi Okidi-Olal, has asserted to various parties that he has been in contact with USG officials, Presidency private secretary Kikaya, and others claiming a mandate to negotiate. Kabila strongly denied any Presidency involvement with Okidi, asserting that his involvement would needlessly complicate the situation. Swing added that MONUC has certainly not invited or asked for Okidi's involvement (Note: as was indicated might be the case in ref D).

15. (C) All information available to the Kinshasa country team closely tracks with that reported by Kampala in ref A, including the overnight continued stay of the GDRC/MONUC delegation in Aba. All of our information indicates that General Padiri has put three options on the table for the LRA contingent; specifically, repatriation to Uganda, return to Sudan, or full disarmament prior to a resolution of the LRA members' status. Otherwise, Padiri reported, the LRA will face armed opposition from GDRC forces.

16. (C) Comment: The Aba area is extremely remote, about 1,800 kms. from Kinshasa in a densely wooded area with limited if any road access. The closest town of any size providing some support infrastructure is Aru, about 130 kms. distant, where MONUC has recently developed an airstrip and some facilities. MONUC deployed a fuel bladder to Aru in recent days to support the Aba delegation visit. Distant as Aba is from Kinshasa, the GDRC fully realizes the potential threat posed by the LRA presence in Congo and is therefore working to quickly resolve the matter. End Comment.

MEECE